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Letter dated 2 February 2006 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to refer to the decision of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union adopted at its 40th meeting, held in Addis Ababa on 6 October 2005, and to Security Council resolution 1633 (2005) of 21 October 2005, under which an International Working Group was created to assist the Government of Côte d'Ivoire in the implementation of its programme and to consolidate and strengthen existing follow-up mechanisms. Please find attached the communiqué issued by the International Working Group following its third meeting, held in Abidjan on 15 January 2006 (see annex). I should be grateful if you would bring the present letter and its annex to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Kofi A. **Annan**

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Annex

International Working Group meeting of 15 January 2006

[Original: French]

Final communiqué

1. The third ministerial meeting of the International Working Group was held in Abidjan on 15 January 2006 under the joint chairmanship of Mr. Oluyemi Adeniji, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Nigeria, and Mr. Pierre Schori, Special Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations for Côte d'Ivoire. It was attended by Ministers from Ghana, Niger, France, the Republic of South Africa and the United Kingdom, as well as the Commissioner for Peace and Security of the African Union, the Commissioner for Development and Humanitarian Aid of the European Commission, the Executive Secretary of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and representatives of the United States of America, Guinea, Benin, the International Organization of la Francophonie, the World Bank and the Office of the High Representative for Elections.

2. The Prime Minister briefed the Group on developments since his appointment, the challenges facing his Government and his strategy for overcoming them.

3. The Group congratulated the Prime Minister on the formation of the new Government and the rapid commencement of its work, which set the stage for ensuring the effective and timely implementation of the road map. In this regard, the Group affirms its full support for the Prime Minister and requests the Mediation Group to maintain a close working relationship with the Prime Minister. The Group also welcomes the commitment by the Prime Minister to work in a spirit of consensus.

4. Pursuant to paragraph 11 of Security Council resolution 1633 (2005), concerning the expiry of the mandate of the National Assembly, the Group held extensive consultations with the Ivorian parties on the functioning of State institutions. The Group reached the conclusion that the mandate of the National Assembly, which ended on 16 December 2005, should not be extended.

5. During the transitional period, however, the Group recommends that the Prime Minister, in consultation with the Head of State, and drawing on the experience of the former parliamentarians, should entrust them with specific tasks, as he deems fit, with a view to the promotion of peace and national reconciliation.

6. Concerned about the impasse in the Independent Electoral Commission, the Group takes note of the intention of the High Representative for Elections to issue his ruling early enough to ensure that the Commission is operational before the Group's next meeting.

7. The Group strongly condemns the serious incidents at the military camps of Akouédo which follow a series of similar incidents aimed at disrupting progress in the peace process. The Group also condemns the gross human rights violations targeting innocent civilians, including foreign nationals, that resulted from the Akouédo incidents. The Group encourages the Government and impartial forces to improve their coordination with a view to creating a secure environment for a

smooth implementation of the road map, particularly by guaranteeing freedom of movement and freedom of political activities throughout the territory.

8. The Group also notes with deep concern the inflammatory tone which continues to be used by some political actors and media. Such a negative attitude not only runs counter to the spirit of the peace and reconciliation process but also represents a flagrant violation of United Nations resolutions.

9. In order to assure the implementation of the identification process, disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, and the holding of elections in an atmosphere of stability and security, the Group recommends that the United Nations Security Council review the troop levels of the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire military and police force in conformity with paragraph 22 of Security Council resolution 1633 (2005).

10. The Group will hold its next meeting on 17 February 2006 in Côte d'Ivoire.